

*Simply
Better!*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Self-Assessment System

Strategic Planning Dimension Workbook

Overview to the Self-Assessment System

Dimension Workbooks

- Customer Focus and Satisfaction
- Leadership
- Information and Analysis
- **Strategic Planning**
- Human Resource Development
- Management of Process Quality
- Quality and Results

Guidebook for Conducting the Self-Assessment

These icons will help you to find your way through all Simply Better! products:



Resources



Answer-Score-
Brainstorm



Group
Exercise



Case Study



Helpful
Hints



Key terms
and Concepts



Useful Notes



World Class

Introduction

Strategic Planning examines your organization's planning process and how all key quality requirements are integrated into overall organizational planning. It also examines short and long-term plans, and how quality performance requirements are deployed in all work units.

By the time you have completed this dimension, you will have identified strengths and opportunities for improvement in these two sections:

A. Strategy Development

The process for developing short (1-2 years) and long-term (3 years or more) strategies and operating plans to achieve leadership in customer satisfaction and overall organizational improvement.

B. Strategy Deployment

The actual goals and plans for the short and long-term, including customer-driven quality goals and performance standards and projections.

The Self-Assessment System

Strategic Planning



In a world class organization, high quality outcomes require a strong future orientation and a willingness to make long-term commitments to all stakeholders — customers, staff, contractors, the public, and the community.

Planning is the means to anticipate many types of changes, including those that may affect customers' expectations of services, technological developments, evolving regulatory requirements, and community expectations.

Short and long-term operating plans, strategies, and resource allocations reflect the commitments and changes, and are understood by everyone in the organization.



Customer

The people, organizations, or groups receiving the products or services of your organization. In the S-A-S, customers are job-seekers and employers, the direct beneficiaries of local workforce development services.

Customer Satisfaction

The degree to which your organization meets or exceeds the needs and expectations of those you serve.

Services

Work done for others. The completion of a process that provides an intangible product which meets a particular customer need. Some workforce development services include job information and referrals, training, and filling job orders.

Customer Driven Quality

Consistently meeting and/or exceeding the ever-increasing needs and expectations of the customer.

Strategic Planning

A future-oriented process of defining the purpose and scope of an organization within which priorities are identified and broad goals are established. Such planning deals with the focus and thrust of an organization and its goals. The process of translating broad policies and goals into plans of action is sometimes considered to be operational planning.

Getting Started

Now that you are familiar with the continuous improvement concepts and terms for Strategic Planning, you are ready to look at how your own organization handles these issues. There are five exercises to complete this dimension.

Answer the Questions

This exercise involves developing a shared understanding of how your organization works. When discussing and answering the questions, your team should develop a common understanding of what is done, who does it, how often, how well, the results achieved, and how well it is documented.

Score the Questions

This exercise is about determining a consensus team score for each section. Each question or sub-element of a question has equal weight. Please see the instructions on the next page.

Brainstorm Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you identify your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Brainstorming can occur after each question is scored or after the entire section has been scored. The purpose of brainstorming is to get ideas out quickly; discussion will come later during the next exercise. All ideas should be recorded using a flip chart or the blank spaces provided in the Brainstorm sections of the booklet.

Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you to make your many lists of strengths and opportunities much more manageable. It will be done after you have finished answering, scoring, and brainstorming for all sections in the dimension. Please see the instructions near the end of the booklet.

Plan for Action

This exercise will lead your team through several initial steps in the overall process for implementing continuous improvement changes. This step may be optional for your team at this stage, depending on what process your organization has chosen to develop a final action plan.

The Self-Assessment System

Strategic Planning

Score the Questions

Follow these instructions to find your team score for where your organization stands on Strategic Planning.

Step One

Individually or as a team decide where your organization falls along the thermometer. This is a continuum, so don't be afraid to locate yourself anywhere along the thermometer.

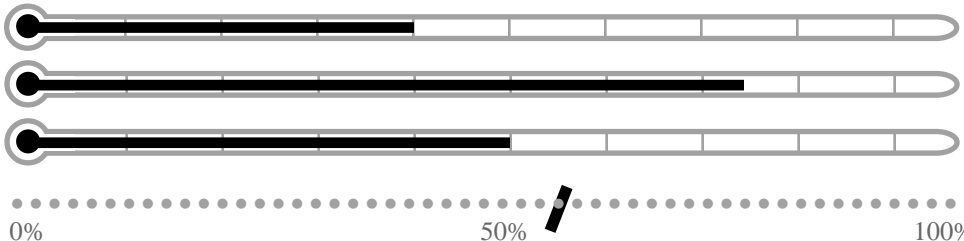
Step Two

Using a crayon or marker, fill in the thermometer up to the point on the scale which best matches your organization. Remember, this is a subjective judgment, so precision is impossible!



Step Three

For each section, mark the average score on the bottom scale. You may want to eyeball the average length of the lines to come up with a score or you may want to compute the average. Again, because this is subjective, precise scoring is not necessary.



In this example, the score is about 55%, which is very good! Most organizations seriously involved in quality and continuous improvement can expect to fall in the 40% - 60% range. Even nationally recognized award winners rarely score above 75% across all categories.

Answer Score Brainstorm



Within each of the Sections - **A** and **B** - you will repeat the following three exercises:

- **Answer** the questions as a team.
- **Score** your organization.
- **Brainstorm** strengths and opportunities for improvement.

After you have covered all of the sections in the dimension, you will complete your work by doing the final two exercises:

- **Discuss and rank** your entire list of strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- **Plan** for action (optional at this stage).

You now have the background information and instructions you need to begin to answer, score and brainstorm the questions for Strategic Planning. Before you continue, be sure that everyone on your team understands the general concepts and terms being used. Also, be sure that everyone has a clear understanding of the instructions and scoring system. Finally, check for consensus about the process that will be used. Remember, this is your process, so feel free to modify and improve it to suit the needs of your team and organization.

A. Strategy Development

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with questions 2-4



Answer these questions:

1. **How do we develop short-term (1-2 year) and longer-term strategies and operating plans to strengthen customer-related, operational, and funding performance?**
2. **What major aspects does our strategy development cover?**
3. **How do we translate our strategies and plans into action and who is involved?**
4. **How do we evaluate and improve our strategic planning process?**



Q1. Strategy and planning refer to a future-oriented basis for making major decisions related to mission, goals, resource allocations, and performance results. Strategy and planning may address both improving performance and expanding revenue levels and sources.

Many workforce development organizations have the flexibility and option to pursue new revenue sources by offering current or new services to new customer groups or diversifying into entirely different funding fields.

Q4. Evaluation and improvement of the strategic planning process might take into account the results of reviews, input from work units, and projection information. It might also include how well strategies and requirements are communicated and understood, and how well key measures are aligned.

The Self-Assessment System

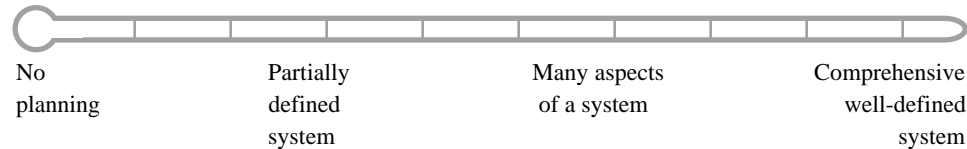
Strategic Planning

Score Section A



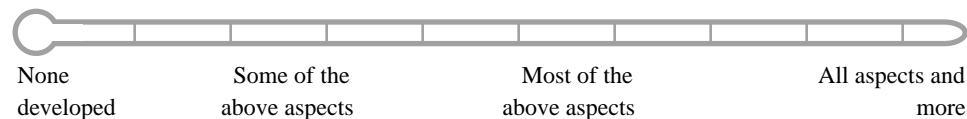
1. How do we develop short-term (1-2 year) and longer-term strategies and operating plans to strengthen customer-related, operational, and funding performance?

Our approach for strategic planning is:



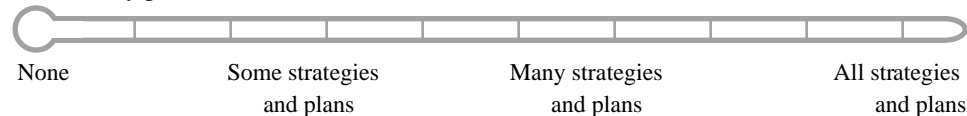
2. What major aspects does our strategy development cover?

Our strategy development considers: a) expected changes in customer requirements; b) competition for funding; c) risks: legislative, financial, technological, and public perception; d) our own capabilities to seek new opportunities and/or prepare for key new requirements; and e) contractor capabilities.



3. How do we translate our strategies and plans into action and who is involved?

We develop clear and measurable performance objectives to guide design and management of key processes for:

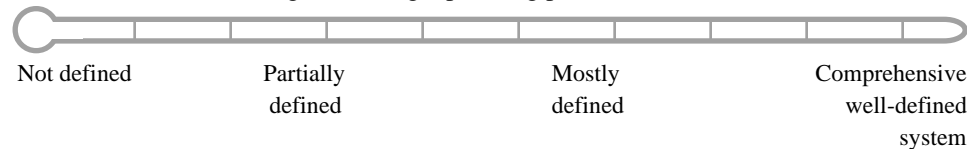


When turning strategies into plans, we involve managers, units, employees, and contractors.

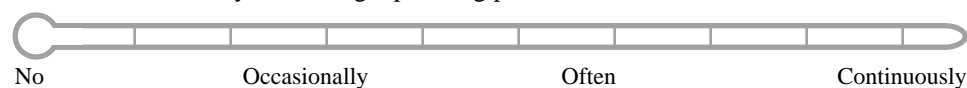


4. How do we evaluate and improve our strategic planning process?

Our methods for evaluating our strategic planning process are:



We review and modify our strategic planning process:





Brainstorm Section A

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).
- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.
- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.
- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

B. Strategy Deployment

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with questions 2 through 5

Answer these questions:



1. What are our key customer-driven quality goals and our key performance goals?
2. How do we align plans and targets for work units, contractors, and partners?
3. How do our goals take into account the standards we must reach to become the “best of the best” in customer satisfaction and overall performance?
4. What is our experience in committing resources to the accomplishment of our plans?
5. What do we expect our performance levels to be in two to five years for our key indicators?



Score Section B

1. What are our key customer-driven quality goals and our key performance goals?

Our quality and performance goals and their respective measures and indicators are in use:

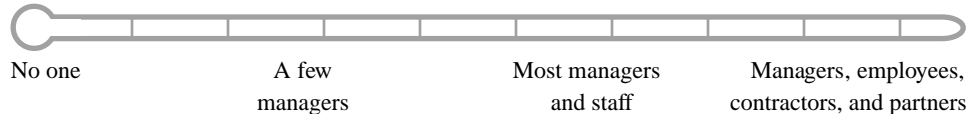


Our goals are aligned to our vision:



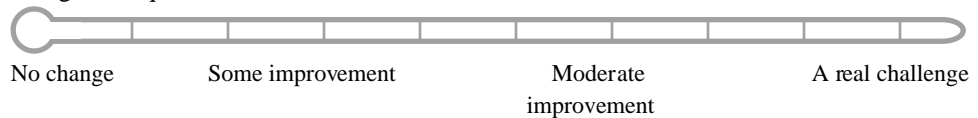
2. How do we align plans and targets for work units, contractors, and partners?

Goals are translated into objectives which are then assigned for accountability to:



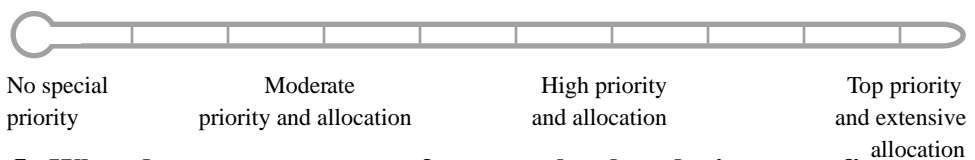
3. How do our goals take into account the standards we must reach to become the “best of the best” in customer satisfaction and overall performance?

Our goals require:



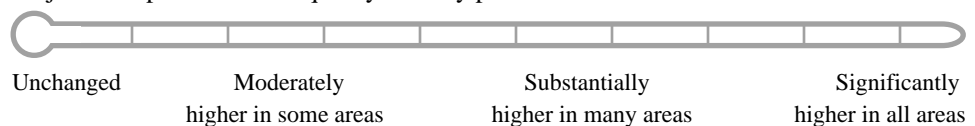
4. What is our experience in committing resources to the accomplishment of our plans?

Resources are provided for education/training, personnel, capital equipment, software, and other investments:



5. What do we expect our performance levels to be in two to five years for our key indicators?

Projected improvements in quality and key performance areas will be:



Brainstorm Section B



- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).
- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.
- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.
- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

Summary of Team Scores

Average the two scores to get an overall score for Strategic Planning.

A. Strategy Development	<input data-bbox="680 380 800 466" type="text" value="%"/>		
B. Strategy Development	<input data-bbox="680 506 800 592" type="text" value="%"/>	Overall Score	<input data-bbox="1065 491 1216 642" type="text" value="%"/>

Remember, this is not a score of how good your organization is - it is a score reflecting how far you are on the road to continuous improvement. This is what the scores tell you:

0% - 10%

You have not or have barely begun to implement continuous improvement into your processes.

10% - 30%

You have begun to implement continuous improvement in a few of your processes.

30% - 60%

You have implemented continuous improvement in a wide range of your processes in many parts of your organization.

60% - 80%

You have implemented continuous improvement processes throughout virtually all of your organization.

80% and above

You have world-class, exceptionally sophisticated processes in all areas of your organization, and you continuously improve the processes themselves.

Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities



Now that you have answered and scored the questions and brainstormed strengths and opportunities for improvement, you need to make some sense of the large quantities of information you have. This exercise will help you to make this information much more manageable. Your flipcharts should be hung around the room where everyone can see them.

- **Group** the similar strengths and opportunities into categories to make the list more manageable. Depending on how many items you have, you may want to start out by brainstorming categories, by eliminating duplicate items, or by marking similar items with numbers or colored dots. Individual items may fall into more than one category. As with brainstorming, there should not be much discussion at this stage, just enough to develop the categories.
- **Choose** the order in which you want to discuss the strengths and opportunities listed. Some may not require much discussion. It can be helpful to set time limits for each item.
- **Discuss** the strengths and opportunities in depth. You do not need to solve problems now; you only need to be sure that you come to a common understanding of which are the most vital to be worked on or represent potential for taking action right away.
- **Rank** the opportunities in the order of importance for developing next steps and future actions.



Plan for Action

Many teams will be instructed by the coordinator to begin the process of planning for action. This process will lead your team through action planning steps and will result in an initial redesign of a service or process.

- **Select** a service or process to be improved. From the list of Opportunities for Improvement select one of the top vital few which were identified as a result of answering the questions. The relative scores for each question or section should provide a starting point for identifying where the largest gaps exist. The priorities for improvement in the organization should also be considered. Decision can be reached by multi-voting and coming to consensus.
- **Describe** the current process. Definition of the current situation began while answering the questions. Further research is now needed to identify the key features of the current process, describe the work flow, and identify current process measures.
- **Determine** the wants, needs, and expectations for the service or process. Determine who the 'customers' of the process are and what they want, need and expect. This step helps define the future desired state for the area under improvement.
- **Gather** data to determine the extent to which the current process meets the wants and expectations. Doing this step provides vital measurable information about the extent to which current reality meets the desired level of performance.
- **Redesign** the improved process to meet the wants, needs, and expectations. Define the design criteria and design the improved process. A measurement system should also be established, and requirements for implementation should be determined.

Take Action

After your team completes the five action planning steps for several of the top-ranked opportunities for improvement, it is time to stop. Your assessment work within this dimension is complete.

Congratulate yourselves for your hard work and accomplishments!

Your next steps are to get together with all the other dimension teams to share what everyone has found and to discuss and rank all the vital opportunities. Once your organization chooses the most important opportunities for taking action, you are ready to take the last two steps in the continuous process improvement model - implement the improvement and manage the process of change.

- **Implement** the improvement. Develop an implementation plan which specifies desired results, assigns responsibilities, and provides time frames. The plan should be approved, communicated, and monitored for results.
- **Manage** the process of change. Obtain customer feedback, monitor performance and impact, communicate the results, and fine tune the process by identifying new areas for improvement.